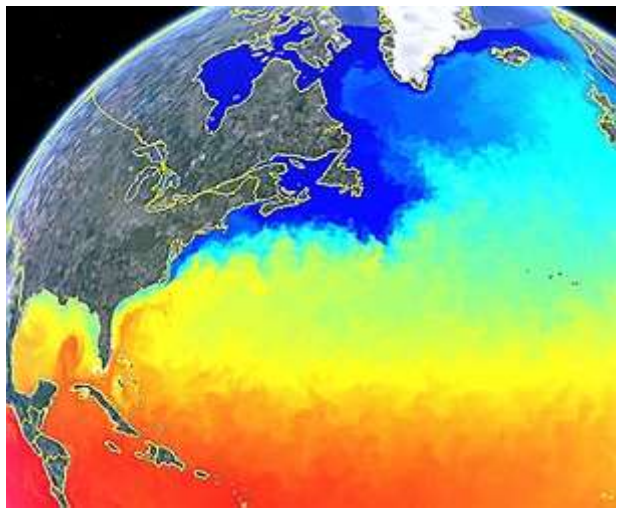
Award for ocean scientists

15 February 2011 - Met Office scientists have been awarded the Denny Medal for the best research paper of 2010 by the Journal of Operational Oceanography.



The paper describes how the Met Office operational Forecasting Ocean Assimilation Model (FOAM) and the new Nucleus for European Modelling of the Ocean (NEMO) work and presents verification of their performance.

FOAM data of the three dimensional density
structure of the ocean were primarily used by the Royal Navy in their sonar propagation models for use in anti-submarine warfare.

From this original use, the model has been developed to provide both our government and commercial customers with forecasts that include:

- Ocean currents
- Salinity
- Ocean surface temperatures
- Sea-ice extent

Such forecasts are critical to sensitive offshore operations such as oil and gas drilling and undersea cable repair.

FOAM has been running operationally at the Met Office for over ten years, taking real-time data from satellites and the 3,000 Argo profiling floats to provide daily global analyses of ocean temperatures, salinity, currents and sea-ice extent and forecasts to five days ahead.

Lead author, Dr Dave Storkey, Met Office Ocean Model Scientist, said: "This prize is recognition of the work done in the Ocean Forecasting team to develop and evaluate an ocean forecasting system of international repute. The FOAM system is showing its worth in the accuracy of forecasts to five days ahead and provides a platform for the development and application of ocean ecosystem models."

Rewarding the science
The paper, 'Forecasting the ocean state using NEMO: The new FOAM system', has been awarded the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) Denny Medal. This medal is awarded to the author of the best paper published in the calendar year. The vote is cast by the journals Editorial Board and the IMarEST Publications Supervisory Board.

Dr. Storkey will be presented with the award, as well as medals for him as lead author and for the Ocean Forecasting team, at the IMarEST Annual General Meeting in March.

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